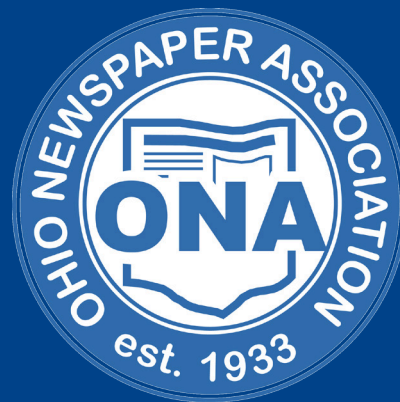


Ohio Newspaper Association Convention

Building Bridges to the Future
February 17-18, 2016
Hilton Columbus/Polaris





Ralph Martin, CEO of Civita Media, speaks during the first general session

Ralph Martin discusses the big picture from the CEO's office

LAUREN FISHER

Having been named CEO in January 2015, Ralph Martin may still be in his early years at Civitas Media, but he is no stranger to the 12-state region that his company serves along the east coast and Midwest.

"I know that if I yelled 'O-H,' I'd get an 'I-O'" Martin told attendees during the first general session of the 2016 ONA Convention.

Headquartered in North Carolina, Civitas produces

more than 100 community-oriented publications and boasts a combined distribution of more than 1.6 million copies.

Martin cited consolidation as a trend that has become necessary for industry growth during a time in which newspapers are often argued to be a dying out. In the near future, he hopes to help the industry to grow, not by "eliminating markets, but sharing strength."

"We're reinventing ourselves as we speak," Martin said of

Civitas. "But as we realign, it's trying to think, 'can these two, or these three, or these four papers find ways to have synergies that will allow them to grow in their individual markets?'"

Such was the case in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, where the consolidation of smaller community newspapers under Martin's leadership doubled readership, taking the daily circulation from 90,000 issues per day to 180,000.

"It fried a lot of us, but at the end of the day, we thought we were on the right track to do good journalism," Martin said. "And that's really what that was all about — trying to make sure we could protect our communities. Because the one thing that is required to have a great newspaper is a pretty good town."

Closing the doors of community newspapers, Martin admits, is far from his favorite part of the job. However, he maintains that the decision is not one made solely by the corporation.

"We didn't make that decision — the community did," Martin said. "And it's unfortunate, and it's sad, but it's still a business ... we didn't have any choice but to

close the papers. We'll probably have to close some more, and that's something that I lose sleep over."

To Kelly Cantwell, editor of *The Clermont Sun*, local coverage is an indispensable part of the community, and one that is best provided by smaller newspapers.

"The issue that smaller papers run into is that they have less money and less resources, but we have to make the most of what we have to connect," Cantwell said. "I think there's a lot of value in local newspapers — you're not going to get good news about Clermont County from *The Cincinnati Enquirer's* paper in downtown Cincinnati."

Though he remains largely optimistic about the future of the newspaper industry, Martin warned community papers of the dangers of the 'death spiral,' by which revenue loss leads to staff cuts, leading into a process that eventually forces small papers to close their doors.

"As long as we're doing our jobs in our community, we're going to last," Martin concluded. "As long as people in the community care, we're still going to be around."

Kight takes aim at resistance to change in workplace culture

KALEB CARTER

It's worth considering whether your ideas are stale because in the newspaper industry, everyday is gameday.

So says Tim Kight, a motivational speaker and consultant to Urban Meyer and the Ohio State University football team. Speaking Thursday morning, Kight talked about instilling culture in groups.

Kight's talk was particularly relevant to an audience

constantly at battle with the perception that the industry surrounding them is failing.

The focus of the talk revolved around the human heart and making personal cultural changes on organizational levels.

Kight's words took aim at the aspect of journalism which has been resistant to adapting to a more digitalized industry.

"It's not the newspaper that resists change, it's the people. And maybe it's some of you people," Kight said.

Much of that change comes

from attitude.

"The human heart looks for congruence between behavior, attitude and words," Kight said. "And if what I hear isn't aligned with what I see and what I feel, what happens?...I'll disconnect. I'll do my job, but only when you're watching."

The speech also focused on the roles of leaders in the industry and within newsrooms. Controlling the workplace culture and setting up an implicit understanding of the general attitude towards

work and the community at-large is another way in which editors, publishers and others can lead the way. Kight suggested those in charge of hiring "hire for attitude, train for skill."

Kight's message is applicable to business, newsrooms or any group with common ideals and goals in mind. Building up a culture, in Kight's mind, is the best way to adapt and succeed in the current state of business.

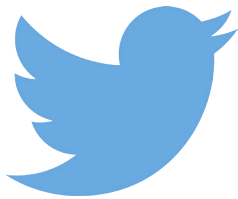
Doug Haddix's tips for using social media

HAYLEY HARDING

If you're not using social media in your newsroom, you're missing out.

Doug Haddix, the director of Ohio State's Kiplinger program in public affairs journalism and a former training director for Investigative Reporters & Editors, spoke Wednesday afternoon about how to best use social media for innovation and to keep track of stories.

Improve on the tools you're already using with Haddix's tips below, and check out the whole presentation at go.osu.edu/haddix.



TWITTER:

- Use Boolean search terms: Works the same way Google search does
- Advanced Search: For when you need to find a specific tweet
- Foller.me: A great way to check who is following whom and more



FACEBOOK:

- Signal: Has special access for journalists
- Search capabilities: Find sources by searching things like "people who live in Akron that like Donald Trump"

GENERAL TOOLS:

NICAR NET TOUR
Tools compiled by other journalists on how to improve your game

REPORTER'S DESKTOP BY DUFF WILSON
A congregate of everything a journalist needs to work online

CENTER FOR INVESTIGATIVE REPORTING GUIDES
Tips from other journalists on everything you didn't realize you need to know

SPJ JOURNALIST'S TOOLBOX
A quick list of resources to help improve an already-great story

OTHER TOOLS:



Collect data every time something happens



Store all your records in one searchable place



Create excellent interactive maps



Use data visualization to enhance stories (free for IRE members)



John D. Kariovec, right, makes an argument during an editorial roundtable.



Andrew King, left, and Lee Cochran, right, participate in an editorial roundtable.

Editors discuss content policies, community outreach

MARGARET MARY HICKS

Whether it's *The New York Times* or the small-town paper with eight people on staff, editors face tough decisions daily.

Peter Bhatia, discussion leader for the editorial roundtable, said it was interesting to see the diversity of opinions on topics in the session.

"So much of what we do operates in gray areas and we have to deal with them situationally," Bhatia said. "So it was a really powerful reminder of how that crosses lines regardless of the size of the newspaper."

Some topics of the conversation include how editors handle redactions and requests to take down certain content as well as the significance of community outreach.

"How we engage with the community, as a weekly it is very important to be in touch with our community and know what they think is important," Bev Keller, local editor of *The Budget* of Sugarcreek, said. "They're not going to come to you in the newsroom, but they'll come sit and have coffee with you at the library and that's important."

Michael Shearer, executive

editor for *The Advocate* of Newark, said that there are different circumstances in which every editor must make decisions on ethical dilemmas.

"I think it's very difficult for some smaller town editors to be firm on what some people might consider traditional or ethical rules," Shearer said. "But there is a lot of gray areas out there that you have to weigh every time in your stories."

The topics of ethical standards have changed dramatically due to the proliferation of digital media because once content is on the website, there will be

traces of it forever.

Some topics are rapidly changing such as the decision on whether to redact a record, but others like releasing a juvenile's name have been disputed for years.

"Those things don't necessarily stay quiet like they used to," Bhatia, Pulitzer Prize-winning editor of *The Cincinnati Enquirer*, said. "So the heart of the issue is still the same but the circumstances around it have changed dramatically because of the digital world."

Newspapers explore untraditional ways to generate revenue

MIKAELA ASHBURN

Magazines and events were both points of interest when ad directors gathered Wednesday for a roundtable.

Lori Figurski, the regional ad director for Ogden Newspapers, led the discussion.

Using new methods to make money off of advertising was a key issue that was discussed.

Lori Carver, vice president of advertising and publisher Mark Cohen unveiled *Savor Magazine*, a newly formed

magazine from The Beacon Journal Publishing Co.

"Savor is about savoring life and everything that comes with it including food, music and theater," Carver added.

The Beacon Journal Publishing Co. is planning on launching the product in May with a 60:40 content to ad ratio.

Some attendees were skeptical of a magazine being a viable source of ad-revenue in their markets. A representative from *Salt Magazine* shared the fact that when the *Lima News*

had formed the magazine it made sure that it created a magazine that was relevant to its readers and their interests.

Events are another rising source of revenue said Amie Stein of Local Media Association.

The Northwest Ohio Rib-Off presented by The Toledo Blade is just one example of an event that is being held by an Ohio newspaper as a way to generate revenue.

If papers are not comfortable presenting events on their own teaming up with local officials

and departments was an additional suggestion.

Of the newspapers that have hosted events a general consensus emerged that events focused on women and seniors tended to do better than events geared toward other demographics.

As for who should staff these events Stein as well as other attendees shared that there are many options available, which include hiring an outside contractor, creating a new staff or even having current advertising staff work on the events.



Members of weekly newspapers participate in roundtable discussion.



From left to right, Lauren Shows, Matt Minde, and Neil Thompson.

Weekly roundtable highlights: Editors discuss digital media, open records, and more

MIKAELA ASHBURN

COLLEGIATE - CEDARS FROM CEDARVILLE UNIVERSITY

The staff at Cedars may be small, but the awards garnered on Wednesday evening proved that their efforts are nothing if not admirable.

Cedars Editor-in-Chief Anna Dembowski, a senior studying journalism, shared her thoughts about the hardships and rewards of managing a collegiate publication alongside sports editor Jonathan Gallardo, a fellow senior studying journalism.

Jeff Gilbert, an associate professor of journalism at Cedarville University and the adviser to Cedars, has observed firsthand many of the challenges faced by student journalists who are often learning the craft while simultaneously putting it into practice.

"I think it's a challenge in a college area," Gilbert said. "You're still learning to tell stories ... and the staffs are so fluid."

NEWS

The discussion on handling various situations that arise

when reporting local news took on many dimensions, centering on issues such as conflicts of interest, the publication of names of prominent citizens in small-town papers and the pressing debate over centralized pagination.

"How does some guy sitting in Texas know what's going on in your town?" David Pugh of the *Archbold Buckeye* asked.

Though his newspaper was purchased nearly two years ago, Terry Smith, editor and associate publisher of *The Athens News*, is proud to say the publication has yet to become a "cookie-cutter community paper," citing that new ownership has mainly affected the financial aspect of the paper.

One of the most difficult issues for small-town newspapers, panelists explained, arise when prominent families and individual members of the community will have their names published for the public to see.

Pugh also voiced his frustration that local broadcast stations could be "a little less scrupulous" about such situations, often speculating on the circumstances before knowing the facts.

DIGITAL MEDIA

Participants at the digital media roundtable focused on the importance of ensuring that weekly newspapers establish a digital presence, rather than a singular presence based solely on print.

One effective way to establish this digital presence, panelists explained, is to promote web content in the print edition while simultaneously promoting print on the web, ensuring that users take interest in both forms.

"We are a daily website and a weekly newspaper," Lee Cochran of *ThisWeek Community Newspapers* said.

Making sure that content is tweeted on writers' personal Twitter accounts as well as on newspaper accounts is another key to driving people to the publication's website.

OPEN RECORDS

As journalists are often expected to be watchdogs for the community, open records are a key to the profession according to Bev Keller, who shared her knowledge of public records along with tips on requesting such records.

Among Keller's tips are:

- Even if you are not sure if a record is open to the public, do not be afraid to ask for it.
- The records must be supplied to you in a reasonable amount of time.
- Do not be afraid to call and check on your request.
- By law, you do not have to have a reason for wanting the records. They are open for the public's use.

ADVERTISING

Both print and web editions of newspapers should be considered equally important when it comes to advertising revenue.

Those seated at the advertising roundtable shared ideas on bundling ads to increase sales and putting special emphasis on multi-platform advertising.

By offering print, web and mobile platforms, participants explained, publications are more likely to be able to advertise creatively in more than one medium.

OCOG seeking to expand influence through fundraising and outreach

KALEB CARTER

Operating on a budget of around \$55,000 isn't cutting it for the Ohio Coalition for Open Government.

The OCOG is a non-profit established by the Ohio Newspaper Association which functions as a watchdog and advocate for open government in Ohio.

The organization, which promotes itself as a "clearinghouse for media and citizen grievances that involve open meetings and open records" also offers guidance to reporters in local government situations. The activities of the Coalition include monitoring government officials for compliance, filing "amicus" briefs in lawsuits, litigation and public education."

Doing this kind of watchdog work isn't cheap, especially when it comes to legal fees.

"As our profile grows and we receive more requests to get involved with cases, our options are increasingly limited because of resources," said Dennis Hetzel, the president of OCOG.

The planning stages are underway for a massive push for money. 2017 is the 25th anniversary of the start of OCOG, and the organization will be looking for the assistance of current and prospective future members and contributors to drastically improve the organization's capital accumulation.

OCOG continues to pursue action on court cases, applying pressure to public bodies to remain transparent and accessible and advocating for laws that promote simplicity in fact-finding for citizens and the media alike.

In 2015, a fairly high profile case arose at Otterbein University relating to access to police records. Police at Otterbein refused to release campus crime reports to student journalists at the student newspaper Otterbein360. The police and the university claimed that they were not liable to be held to the standards of the Public Records Act in Ohio.

"For us, it wasn't just about Otterbein, it was about any private university

being able to say that you can't have the records of our campus police department even though...they get their authority through state law," said Monica Nieporte of *The Athens Messenger* and chair of OCOG. "They were not releasing information to the student newspaper. That had ramifications well beyond Otterbein."

This was part of the reason OCOG felt the need to jump in and support the Otterbein paper with an amicus brief. There was a broader issue at hand that extended past just Otterbein, and resulted in a celebrated victory for open government by media and first amendment advocates.

But this was hardly the only thing that OCOG put its time and resources toward. OCOG also keeps a close eye on Sunshine laws. Specifically, Hetzel noted in a powerpoint presentation that ONA and OCOG are keeping an eye on several state house bills which have implications around sunshine laws.

Other issues to tackle include police body cameras, working towards a more preferable

definition of "open meetings," and seeking to change the public records appeals process.

Such investments require a hefty price.

"Legal fees get very expensive. Even though we do have attorneys who are part of OCOG, we're lucky to have their services at a greatly reduced rate, but still these cases drag on," Nieporte said. "Fees mount up. The past two years we've spent about \$10,000 in legal fees."

"The committee has discussed having some type of an event in coordination with next year's conference," Nieporte said. "That would be a special fundraising event only for OCOG."

The money is necessary if OCOG is to continue to grow its presence in the state and promote open government as a whole, something it desperately wants to do.

"We just really want to see more people outside of just the newspaper industry involved because you know, the issue of open government is for everybody, not just the press," Nieporte said.



Mugs promote the importance of journalism

HAYLEY HARDING

Those interested in supporting the Ohio Newspapers Foundation need to look no further than the iconic #journalismmatters mugs sold at the 2016 conference.

"It was something we came up with to raise some money for the foundation," said

Ann Riggs, the receptionist and secretary for the Ohio Newspaper Association. "We thought it would be a good way to promote that journalism matters and that journalists matter."

The mugs, which are still available at the Ohio Newspaper Association's Columbus office, sold for \$20. The proceeds go to support scholarships, future conferences and other programs through ONA.

Sue Bazzoli, manager of

administrative services for ONA, said she thought the mugs would make a great present.

"We wanted something that everyone could use, and we got to talking about how people could give them as gifts to employees or co-workers," Bazzoli said. "They're just a great way to share what matters and help the Foundation."

All speakers got a mug for free, and by the end of the day Thursday, at least a dozen mugs had been sold.

Push Sunshine laws to burn brighter

HAYLEY HARDING

Public officials are embracing new technology as it rises, and journalists need to follow suit—and sometimes file suit, if the government refuses to release records like body camera footage.

Sunshine Laws in Ohio are changing all the time. In a session Thursday morning, participants had a frank talk about what is and is not a public record and why that matters for journalists in cases like the shooting of Sam DuBose in Cincinnati.

Journalists from publications across the country, including several in Ohio, fought hard for the release of the body camera footage from Ray Tensing, the officer accused of shooting DuBose in July 2015.

Officials and citizens went back and forth on whether the body camera footage was public record. This video was considered a public record and released because the event happened publicly and it sparked an incident report, which is always public record. Several outlets sued to make sure the footage was released.

When trying to get records, the experts recommend journalists be persistent. Sometimes records-filing entities just forget the request hasn't been handled yet and need a nudge in the right direction. Panelists also recommended requestors try to get the records in a form most convenient to them. Many records are being stored electronically, so it is often possible to get digital copies, although journalists may need to have technologically savvy

people from both parties figure out the details.

"The impact of technology on open records is more profound than we can imagine," Karen Lefton, a panelist and an attorney with a background in journalism, said. "It used to be that the only people requesting public records were journalists because people didn't really know what went on with the government. Now, with so many things being on the Internet, we have not just journalists going after these records but also regular people."

Not every public record will cause national outrage and rallies in the streets as it did in the DuBose case, but journalists should fight for them all the same. Jack Greiner, a panelist as well as an attorney with Cincinnati firm Graydon, Head and Ritchey, said there are key questions to consider when fighting for open government and when deciding a lawsuit is necessary when requests don't get filled.

"Is the record worth pursuing? Is a meeting or court proceeding worth attending? How important is it?" Greiner said. "That frames the approach and how far you take it, ultimately."

"The impact of technology on open records is more profound than we can imagine"

-KAREN LEFTON



Edward Bergmann talks about employment law issues

Navigating the exemption minefield

KALEB CARTER

Employers in the newspaper industry, it might be time to pay attention to the exemption minefield before you.

Edward Bergmann of the Chicago office of Seyfarth Law LLP spoke about employment law issues geared towards department heads.

Bergmann spent most of his time speaking on the exempt status of certain employees and on recent developments in law relating to the Fair Labor Standards Act.

Under the act, nonexempt employees are entitled to overtime pay while exempt employees are not.

"For non-exempt, the biggest issue I think you find in the newspaper industry is proper reporting of hours worked," Bergmann said. "Where we see that the most is with respect to people who spent most of their time working in the field."

For exempt status, proposed regulations are still in the works as employers anxiously await what will be highly consequential results.

The decision could come

down from the Department of Labor as early as May or as late as the end of the year. Bergmann predicts July for the decision to be finalized.

What this ultimately comes down to are possible adjustments to the duties test and to salary bases for exempt employees.

"The exempt status duty test often revolves around positions like reporters. They have a byline in this. Photographers. Editors," Bergmann said.

The duties test deals with whether a qualitative or quantitative figure is used to determine exempt status.

The salary bases are another story. Salary levels for exempt status could rise dramatically under new regulations. Because base levels of pay vary so drastically different across different regions of the country (and when comparing rural and urban areas), Bergmann suggests that salary base level raises could mean drastic changes for the newspaper industry and could result in substantial cuts.

That's plenty of reasons for those in the industry to pay close attention as this develops.



HOOPER AWARDS:

Division A:
The Athens News
(top center)

Division B:
Chagrin Valley Times
(bottom center)

Division C:
Englewood
Independent (left)

Division D:
Yellow Springs News
(right)



COLLEGIATE AWARDS:

Division A:
The Lantern, Ohio State
University (left)

Division B:
Cedars, Cedarville University
(center)

**CHAMPION OF OPEN
GOVERNMENT AWARD:**
Anna Schiffbauer (right)

MAXWELL AWARD:

Lou Colombo,
Retiring general counsel
to the ONA (left)

PRESIDENT'S AWARD:

John Wolfe,
Former publisher and
family owner of *The
Columbus Dispatch*
(right)





From left to right, Jim Barger, Michelle Novak, and Jim Zellner participate in a panel on digital display and database advertising.

Newspapers go beyond static ads with digital display and database advertising

LAUREN FISHER
MARGARET MARY HICKS

When looking toward the future of advertising for community newspapers, perhaps it's time to take another look at email databases, according to Michelle Novak.

One of the most effective ways to do this, Novak, manager of client sales and services for Presslaff Interactive, explained, is through the collection of an email address database by which individual users can be targeted based on information provided about their demographics and lifestyles.

After spending 15 years in local and corporate media, Novak turned her attention to the inner workings of databases, focusing on how publications can use the tools already at their disposal to build better relationships with their readers.

"Make sure I spend the time to read the newspaper that night," Novak said.

In today's ever-changing

media environment, effective advertising means going above and beyond static display advertising.

According to Jim Barger, president of Media Links Advertising, it is essential for clients to have a strong presence online, now more than ever before.

Barger recalled a time when he was listening to a radio interview with Mark Zuckerberg, who talked about the complete shift of advertising today and how it is the user that requests information and then it is paid for by the third party.

"That is a complete paradigm shift for what I have done my entire career," Barger said. "Basically what we've always done is tried to send out as much as we can in the hope that there are some people in the market, whereas now we can target it."

One of the biggest goals for Media Links Advertising is to eliminate waste audience, Barger said, and now it is easier to do so through digital database advertising.

"It's always been about minimizing waste audience and this doesn't just minimize it, it darn near eliminates it," Barger said.

Novak said it is important to understand the target audience and make sure the information displayed is relevant by trying to talk to them about things they care about.

"The difference between spam and good emails ... is about whether the content is relevant to you," Novak said. "It's about knowing more about who your audience is and delivering and sending to people what's relevant based on information they've shared in the past."

In a recent audience research survey conducted by *The Courier* of Findlay promoted via web, social media, and email, Jim Zellner of *The Courier* sought to gather feedback and opinions on both digital and traditional offerings.

Zellner, a client of Media Links Advertising, also said that the impressions being made are delivered 78 percent

of the time to mobile phones.

"There used to be almost a large majority that were delivered to computers and laptops and now as time goes on they are being delivered to mobile phones" Barger said.

Nearly 700 responses were recorded during the *Courier* survey, with readers providing "valuable data" about their awareness of digital products, and expressing a need for the paper to provide more local and feature content. According to Novak, conducting the online survey saved *The Courier* \$8,000 in research costs.

"We don't do much email marketing or direct marketing or surveying, but that does seem like something that we should be doing," Ryan Snyder of *The Daily Standard* of Celina said. "Where I struggle the most is trying not to be Big Brother, knowing too much about my people ... so how do I balance the information so that I make sure people can give me their information and I don't take it?"



From left to right, Kurt Franck, Doug Oplinger, and Wesley Lowery speak on a panel in honor of the 100th anniversary of the Pulitzer Prize.

Convention honors Ohio's Pulitzer winners with presentation, video

LAUREN FISHER
MARGARET MARY HICKS

In honor of the 100th anniversary of the Pulitzer Prize, the Ohio Newspaper Association paid homage to Ohio's past winners.

Following a video created by Ohio University journalism students, George Rodrigue, editor of *The Cleveland Plain Dealer*, moderated a panel that included three of Ohio's Pulitzer winners.

The panel included input from Kurt Franck of *The Toledo Blade*, Wesley Lowery of *The Washington Post*, and Doug Oplinger of the *Akron Beacon Journal*.

These renowned journalists shared their insight on the

future of journalism as both an industry and a craft.

Rodrigue described his experience with Pulitzer-prize winning reporting as he led his team from *The Dallas Morning News* to the prestigious award.

Rodrigue said he believes the reward was solely in doing good high-quality work.

"The prize was just a nice extra," Rodrigue said.

Franck, who currently serves as executive editor of *The Blade*, directed the Pulitzer-winning Tiger Force investigative series, bringing to light the war crimes committed by an elite American platoon during the Vietnam War. The investigation, Franck explained, began when six seemingly-insignificant boxes

of records were placed on the desk of Washington bureau reporter.

"We're out for the barbarians. We're looking to uncover some things that have never been reported... people never knew about an elite force — these were the best of the best — killing hundreds of Vietnamese for no reason whatsoever," Franck said. "And our job as journalists ... is to uncover those rocks. And any newspaper, if they work hard enough, they can do that job."

Oplinger, who has served the past nine years at the *Akron Beacon Journal* as the paper's managing editor, reflected on the three Pulitzers that his paper received throughout his 45-year tenure. From

investigations into race relations in the area following the 1965 Watts Riots, to exploring the effects of a tire factory on a local town, the *Beacon Journal* produces coverage that affects life in the community, according to Oplinger.

"This is the kind of journalism that matters," Oplinger said. "Whether or not it wins awards."

Rodrigue also agreed that it is important to genuinely serve the community and to pay more attention to when important things happen.

"There is a huge component of public service and I think that's really important," Rodrigue said. "I think that's great because that's why we

are here and if we don't serve our audience why would we be here and why would they want us?"

Lowery, who currently covers law enforcement and justice for *The Washington Post*, previously worked as a political reporter for *The Boston Globe*, where he was present for the Pulitzer-winning breaking news coverage of the 2013 Boston Marathon Bombing.

Citing fewer resources available to newspapers throughout the country, Lowery emphasized the importance of publications joining forces in order to tell the stories that matter to readers.

"There is still is a very vibrant universe of papers doing very important

investigative work and enterprise work," Lowery said. "At the end of the day, no matter what medium, what matters is storytelling."

Franck seconded Lowery's motion, adding that newspapers have to "be smarter and think smarter" in order to find future success.

"Journalism in 2016 is a lot different than it was in 2003, when we pursued Tiger Force or we looked at Coin Gate," Franck said. "We have to join forces. We have to figure out that our readers don't really care where the source comes from ... they're not looking at the byline. They want the information."



Convention attendees listen to speakers on a panel in honor of the 100th anniversary of the Pulitzer Prize.

**Missed the video?
Watch it at www.ohiopulitzers.com**

New research cites millennials as 'voracious' news consumers

LAUREN FISHER
MARGARET MARY HICKS

The final session of the conference was led by Brittany Bunkers, a consultant of Frank N. Magid Associates, a strategic communications firm based out of Minneapolis.

Magid focuses on helping businesses develop and launch new products and services, working with clients to reimagine their businesses and further their content through marketing and branding efforts. Mainly operating in the media and entertainment industry, the company's client list encompasses a wide array

of businesses, including The *New York Times*, Verizon Wireless, and Starbucks.

In a recent study conducted by Magid, researchers found that 18-24 year-olds consult twice as many sources for their news as members of older generations.

Millennials, Bunkers explained, are "voracious news consumers," though research has shown that, despite having more outlets than ever before, they are still not completely satisfied with their news sources.

"What they want is credibility and consistency," Bunkers said. "Don't just tell me the facts. Tell me what it means for me."

According to Bunkers, younger generations are accessing news often, and typically through mobile means, utilizing smartphones and social media to stay up to date

with current events. A recent Magid study found that 60 percent of millennials use smartphones at least twice per week to consume news.

Andy Young of *The Chronicle Telegraph* said that he was more surprised to hear how millennials are accessing their news, rather than the plain fact that they are consuming it in the first place.

"I think everybody's interested in news — it's the human condition — you want to know what's news, what's happening," Young said. "But I was surprised that there was so much interest in the newspaper format among millennials."

Pamela Wagner of *The Cleveland Plain Dealer* has observed the habits of the younger generation firsthand, as the mother of two millennials.

"You know, it's changing so

fast that it's hard to keep up ... they're constantly looking for better ways to get what they want and what they're hungry for," Wagner said. "Nothing out there has satiated their appetites."

In describing the type of storytelling that attracts young news consumers, Bunkers drew upon John Oliver's late-night satire talk show, *Last Week Tonight*, citing its ability to engage an audience through witty criticism and interactive mediums.

"It's all about the storytelling," Bunkers explained. "He's using what journalists have started. He's essentially doing the job that you should be doing. That's the kind of engagement you can give your readers ... you just have to give them something to react to."



Amie Stein talks about how journalists can make better use of data.

“Big Data” could pay big dividends

KALEB CARTER

“Big Data” is a term that sometimes triggers anxiety or dismissiveness in the newspaper industry.

A group of data specialists spoke at the Ohio Newspaper Association Conference to give industry professionals a better idea as to how they could make better use of such data.

Panelists Nikhil Hunshikatti, Amie Stein and Chris Lintner spoke Wednesday to a room full of journalists, marketers and other industry professionals on how better excavation of data could benefit them all.

Hunshikatti is the vice president of marketing for the *Columbus Dispatch*. He explained how he and his staff worked with Mather Economics, a consulting firm that uses tools to help businesses better understand customers and develop better strategies, to find trends and gather data points useful to the publication.

One way Hunshikatti and his colleagues do so is by assigning grades on a scale of one to five to consumers based on their value to Dispatch Media Group. Scores of one or two are

customers of low importance to DMG, but are obviously still valuable. Customers with a score of four or five are highly-valued customers.

The grades are created in the form of a Consumer Lifetime Value score. The formula for CLV is average cost of revenue, minus cost, multiplied by lifetime value based on the retention rate. This information is accessible to Mather Economics, to those who field customer service calls from customers and to the marketers in order for all to best move forward with strategy.

“The concept of lifetime value is basically a mathematical calculation that we generate based on that individual versus cost, what it takes to keep that individual,” Hunshikatti said. “Revenue confidence could be anywhere from how much they are paying for their subscription to the ... advertising inserts that get delivered in their newspaper to the ads that run inside the newspaper.”

There are differences in value when it comes to digital consumption versus print consumption, but there are still plenty of analytics for both.

Hunshikatti cited the measurement of Facebook analytics, cookies for anonymous users on the Dispatch website, and other examples of ways in which DMG has been able to improve the sale of subscription, traffic on posts and other important metrics.

Amie Stein, Training and Development Director for the Local Media Association spent her lecture time focused around the five reasons for newspapers to use data.

Those reasons included:

- Don’t assume it
- Driving engagement
- Marketing effectiveness
- Sales optimization
- Reporting

Assumptions about data creates traps that newspapers could avoid by better data use. Engaging people is necessary to thrive, and knowing how effective a paper’s strategies are is a critically important reason to use data.

“I think the tactical use of data to understand subscriber profiles which ultimately determines how you market and message to them as specific audience segments is a perfect

illustration of how and why to use data,” Stein said.

Chris Lintner, Product Marketing manager of Public Insight, promoted useful and often underutilized public data. The American Fact Finder database, created by Public Insight, is a tool used by many journalists and others in the newspaper industry to gain access to and configure large segments of public data together into cohesive and simple tables. In his words, “it makes data consumption simple.” Lintner noted that much of the data consumed on the Fact Finder was pooled directly from census data and information from Bureau of Labor Statistics.

“What I think is really important to know is you already probably have a ton of information on your current customers,” Lintner said. “But what you’re also going to have to understand is the people that aren’t your customers that could be customers and why they are not your customers.”

Data can pay dividends if used correctly. Where that data goes and just how much it benefits newspapers is still something to watch.

Favorite

Base College: Ohio University-Main Campus

Output Type: DATA REPORT

Category: Student Debt






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Data Source: U.S. Department of Education

Series: Median Debt

Keyword Search: e.g., "Head Count", Race, Enrollment


Search

Data	Periods	Entities	Output	Metric	Additional Metrics
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Add selected metrics to: Report

Add



Ohio University-Main Campus

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<input type="checkbox"/> Male Students	13,834.0
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<input type="checkbox"/> Students who have Completed	22,500.0
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<input type="checkbox"/> Students with Family Income \$75,001+	15,500.0
<input type="checkbox"/> Dependent Students	15,000.0
<input type="checkbox"/> Independent Students	13,600.5
<input type="checkbox"/> Pell Students	15,500.0

Public Insight is a useful tool to gather public record analytics. Here you'll find information about Student Loan Debt from the U.S. Department of Education.

New newspaper buyers emerge in the post-recession era

KALEB CARTER

Sara April, vice president of media sales firm Dirks, Van Essen & Murray lectured Wednesday on the worth of newspapers today.

Her work at the firm is to assist in the company's main venture: newspaper mergers, acquisitions, appraisals and consulting. She is involved with about 12 such deals per year.

April shared an anecdote about a 2006 Economist article entitled "Who Killed The Newspaper?" that proved to have truth to it, as the newspaper industry fell on hard times during the Great Recession. 2009 in particular saw a tremendous drop in ad revenue.

"I would argue that few industries felt the impact of the Great Recession more than newspapers did," April said.

EBITDA is how, in this case, newspaper values are measured. That's Earnings Before Interest, Taxes, Depreciation and Amortization.

In 2008, "activity ground nearly to a halt. However the marketplace for newspapers has steadily been building back since then, albeit at lower levels and with different players," April said. This is almost entirely attributable to the loss of ad dollars, which took a substantial hit as a result of the recession.

By 2009, newspapers were worth four times EBITDA. This means that if a newspaper pulled in 1 million dollars in cash flow, and it sold for 5 million, it would be five times

that value.

"From 2008 to 2009, most public newspapers lost 80 to 90 percent of value," said April.

However, April's talk focused a good deal on how that fall slowed, and that newspapers have in fact continued to show they have substantial value since 2011.

"There's a marketplace. Deals are happening," April said.

70 daily papers were sold last year in 27 transactions. 67 were sold in 2014 in 23 transactions. Why are people still making these transactions?

"At today's prices, even with conservative financial projections, newspapers companies can still provide an attractive return on their investment," April said. "The investment carries low risk. Yes. Low risk."

A new diverse group of buyers have emerged to take advantage.

The "accidental" publishers who were stuck with papers in the recession are selling off their stakes. In their place, groups and people like Warren Buffett, Civitas Media (which owns 18 Ohio papers) and Adams Publishing Group jumped into the purchasing fray.

Public companies also made a comeback, with Gannett being a notable one as it remains likely to purchase Journal Communications. A majority (61 percent) of dailies that changed hands were bought by a public company. There are now eight public news companies, compared to four in 2013.

"These transactions helped create the steady deal

environment of the post-recession environment," April said.

The industry isn't losing anymore, April said. In her mind, new streams of digital revenue are being created and will factor into profit margins in the future.

"Today advertisers and readers have the choice of many different roads but they're still choosing us because local media companies are still the conduit connecting local residents and local businesses," April said.

There is a model there. Profitability seems to still be available. Where new media in a digital age heads is still up in the air. This seems to be the worth of modern newspapers.



Sara April talks about the value of newspapers today.



From left to right, Sylvia Pérez, Hagit Limor, and Tracey Todd talk about the way journalists cover elections.

Journalists should be the connecting link between elected officials and the issues that matter to Ohio voters

MIKAELA ASHBURN

Political warfare is yet again coming to Ohio, but as the panel discussion “Election Coverage that Matters” showed, it’s not too late for the media to raise the level of political discourse in the state. The panel, led by Doug Oplinger of the *Akron Beacon Journal* and including Hagit Limor of WXIX-TV, Sylvia Pérez of the Cleveland Foundation, and Tracey Todd from the National Institute for Civil Discourse, shared their experiences from a recent conference held by The Center for Public Discourse.

Voters, journalists and elected officials all came together to discuss two things: “To see if we could bring respect back into political discussion and to see if they could understand others point of view without being hostile toward the others,” Hagit Limor said.

Participants split into groups and were asked identify the biggest challenges in doing their jobs and to identify their perceptions of the other two groups. All groups realized they had something to learn from one another.

Citizens feel “a lack of respect and empathy for our lives and a disconnection between the professionals that we have asked to volunteer through their career choices and who we depend on to defend democracy,” Sylvia Pérez said.

Pérez encouraged both journalists and officials to forget their job titles and consider what a story or issue would mean to a family member or someone who could be affected by the issue.

To create a more inclusive environment, Tracey Todd encouraged journalists to stop using headlines resembling clickbait, and instead to include

better social media practices while keeping the same standard that people trust.

Following this event journalists from all over the state met and decided to start a still unnamed media collaboration.

“Our job is to know intimately the stories of Ohioans, to know the data behind those people so that we know the issues,” Oplinger said.

The economy is a major issue for Ohioans, and through this collaboration, a project was launched to collect data on the economy in Ohio. The project findings will be shared with various Ohio news organizations.

The project will encourage reporters to go out and get the stories of Ohioans so when people hear the platforms of politicians, voters and journalists can say “wait, this is what matters to us,” Oplinger said.

Attendees voiced concerns

that candidates and officials already have agendas when they get to town and are not willing to stray from them. The story should be exactly that, Pérez believes. “So I mean as a reader I...honestly would appreciate reading an article that says this candidate came to my town and didn’t accept a single question from the reporter, this candidate was only interested in their stunt speech, Perez said. “He or she didn’t come and listen to you to us.” Limor added that this story is not an editorial, and newspapers should not be afraid to publish a story of that nature.

Some attendees worried this would slant the news. Pérez replied that although she is not a journalist, she thought the slant seemed supported by numbers and saw nothing wrong with it as a reader.

Virtual Reality provides new opportunities in storytelling

Modern tool creates powerhouse for 360° journalism

MARGARET MARY HICKS

When asked to describe the concept of virtual reality to a 10-year-old, Mitch Gelman said he would rather ask the 10-year-old to explain it to him.

"It's basically the opportunity to go inside a story," Gelman, the vice president of product at Gannett Digital, said.

According to the report "Bringing You into the News: The State of Virtual Reality in Journalism" from Gannett Digital, virtual reality is an experience that establishes an environment where people can feel like they are present in a place they are not.

"I can think of a lot of ways that this could be used, where no matter where you are or what you're doing, as a group or traveling for instance and you're sightseeing," Ann Riggs, secretary for Ohio Newspaper Association, said. "It's like taking you back to where you were and you get a much wider scope."

Riggs said that in movies and TV shows, the viewer has to wait to see a certain perspective, but in virtual reality, the viewer can see things at every angle.

"It's a good tool that might help specific individuals and maybe the police officers, even teachers," Riggs said. "You will be able to record the actions of the unruly kids in the classroom, I don't know. It could be used for

a lot of things sure."

Virtual reality is not only used for video games and stories, but also for medicine, education, architecture and more, the report from Gannett Digital stated.

Some prominent news outlets that have reaped the benefits of virtual reality in reporting include *The Washington Post*, BBC and *The Wall Street Journal*.

The New York Times and Gannett Digital also created their own virtual reality apps.

Gannett Digital has a story that places the viewer inside of



Back To The Future's DeLorean with Doc sitting in the passenger seat.

Despite the vast and unlimited possibilities of virtual reality, Jim Krumel, editor at *The Lima News*, said he does not know how certain types of breaking news content would be broadcasted within it.

"We had a story about a police officer who allegedly raped a young girl, and how do you tell that story in virtual reality?" Krumel said. "I mean, those are big stories for us so I don't know

how that would transform (the media). It seems to be more of a lifestyle type thing."

Even though there is potential for virtual reality, Krumel said that there is still opportunities for development.

"I think it's a neat idea, a neat concept, I just don't know where you go with it," Krumel said. "I think that we need to keep exploring things like that and this is the next thing. ... It's pretty cool to see."



Ken Douthit, president of Douthit communications, tries virtual reality.

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